Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself.
—*The Voice of the Silence*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 57 FEBRUARY, 1969 NUMBER 4

THE AMERICAN DREAM

AS historians have shown, there are many ways in which to think of the origins of the United States. The month of February, in which occur the birthdays of two great citizens of this country, makes an occasion for recalling the labors of a third, Thomas Paine, whose ideas embodied the principles of the Republic which was established in the Western world a little less than two centuries ago.

In *Liberalism and American Education in the Eighteenth Century* (Macmillan, 1926), Allen O. Hansen put in a few words the importance of Paine's contribution to the American nation:

> Because of his revolutionary principles and his genius for expressing them, Thomas Paine was brought to America by Benjamin Franklin to be the pamphleteer for the American Revolution. His essays were written by the camp-fires of the Revolutionary army and were read to all of the soldiers by the order of Washington. A sentence in Thomas Paine's *Letter to the People of France* most aptly gives the key to his life work: "Let us punish by instructing rather than by revenge." It was his belief that the abuses of mankind rested ultimately in ignorance and that enlightenment was the sure remedy for oppression. He was made, in fact, the master teacher of the American nation in the principles of democracy.

Little by little, Paine's part in the shaping of American history has come to be appreciated. His equal interest in freeing the minds

of men from the bonds of religious dogma was a source of much antagonism toward him while he lived, and of calumny after he died. Yet it is now becoming evident that Paine's position concerning religion, as well as concerning race, was based upon universal ethical laws. Much bloodshed and sorrow might have been avoided if his counsels had been heeded. Soon after he arrived in America, in 1774, he wrote for the *Pennsylvania Journal* an article advocating emancipation of the slaves, a proposal which would have made the Civil War unnecessary, and, quite likely, the present troubles in the cities of the country nonexistent.

Despite the slur of Theodore Roosevelt, Paine was not an Atheist. He called himself a Deist—Deism embodied the philosophical religion of his time—and declared his belief in the "First Cause eternally existing, of a nature totally different to any material existence we know of, and by the power of which all things exist." He called the anthropomorphic God of traditional Christian teaching a "species of Atheism—a sort of religious *denial* of God." The recent Supreme Court decision in the Seeger case (380 U.S. 163, 1965) illustrates what might be regarded as a general cultural evolution in the direction of his views, or at least a recognition of their validity.

An article by Mr. Judge, under the signature of "Ex-Asiatic," published by H.P.B. in the *Theosophist* for October, 1883, strongly suggests that Paine was under the influence of those adepts who continually exert themselves in behalf of human freedom. At its beginning this article says:

> The reflecting mind is filled with astonishment upon reviewing the history of the rise of the United States of N. America, when it perceives that dogmatic theology has no foundation in any part of the Declaration of Independence or Constitution for the structure which it fain would raise and has so often since tried to erect within and upon the government. We are astonished because those documents were formulated and that government established at a time when dogmatism of one kind or another had supreme sway. Although the Puritans and others had come to America for religious freedom, they were still very dogmatic and tenacious of their own peculiar theories and creed; so that if we found in this fundamental law much about religion and religious establishments, we would not be surprised. But in vain do we look for it, in vain did the supporters of the iron church attempt to lay the needed corner stone, and today America rejoices at it, and has thereby found it possible to grow with the marvelous growth that has been the wonder of Europe.

After reciting the safeguards to religious freedom found in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, Mr. Judge gives a brief history of Paine's services to the revolutionary cause—which were noted more than once by George Washington—and then turns to Paine's own explanation of his inspiration:

> In "the Age of Reason" which he wrote in Paris several years after, Paine says: "I saw, or at least I thought I saw, a *vast scene opening itself to the world* in the affairs of America; and it appeared to me that unless the Americans changed the plan they were then pursuing and declared themselves independent, they would not only involve themselves in a multiplicity of new difficulties, but shut out the prospect that was *then offering itself to mankind through their means.*" Further on he says: "There are two distinct classes of thoughts; those produced by reflection, and those *that bolt into the mind of their own accord.* I have always made it a rule to treat these voluntary visitors with civility, and it is *from them I have acquired all the knowledge that I have.*"

Mr. Judge wrote approximately a century after Paine set down this account of his vision of the high promise of America, and it is now more than eighty-five years later that we consider Mr. Judge's words. Looking about, we see both fulfillment and failure of the eighteenth-century dream. The material achievements have multiplied beyond wildest imaginings of utopian writers, while the moral qualities which the Founding Fathers also expected to flower have been sadly interrupted in their development. How may this failure be explained? It certainly was not anticipated by the patriots of the American Revolution, who expected the experience of political freedom to be ennobling, the responsibilities of self-government to serve as discipline, and the progress of science to be a boon to all the world. One has only to read a book like that of Allen Hansen, quoted earlier, to recall the feelings of high anticipation which animated men like Paine and Washington, Benjamin Rush, Nathaniel Chipman, and other distinguished Americans who devoted themselves to planning the institutions of American government and education—expecting these to inaugurate a true Renaissance of civilization in the New World.

A distant vision of America's glorious future is given in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 444-46), but it is plain that mere "national" identities are lost in the sweep of what Madame Blavatsky speaks of as "the mankind of the New World," whose mission it will be "to sow the seeds for a forthcoming, grander, and far more glorious Race than any of those we know of at present." In the meantime

there is the Karma of Kali Yuga to be met and dealt with. Its application to America is considered by Mr. Judge in the third chapter of his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita,* where he speaks (p. 87) of the failure of Western thought to comprehend the meaning of sacrifice. He says:

> Although Moses established sacrifices for the Jews, the Christian successors have abolished it both in spirit and letter, with a curious inconsistency which permits them to ignore the words of Jesus that "not one jot or tittle of the law should pass away until all these things were fulfilled." With the culmination of the dark age it was, however, natural that the last vestige of sacrifice should disappear. On the ruins of the altar has risen the temple of the lower self, the shrine of the personal idea. In Europe individualism is somewhat tempered by various monarchical forms of government which do not by any means cure the evil; and in America, being totally unrestrained and forming in fact the basis of independence here, it has culminated. Its bad effects—vaguely as yet shadowing the horizon—might have been avoided if the doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion had been also believed in by the founders of the republic. And so, after the sweeping away of the fetters forged by priestly dogma and kingly rule, we find springing up a superstition far worse than that which we have been used to call by the name. It is the superstition of materialism that bows down to a science which leads only to a negation.

There are today books and articles aplenty to spell out in forceful terms and in many particulars the "bad effects" of which Mr. Judge speaks. Articles by Richard Poirier, James S. Kunen, and Nicholas von Hoffman, for example, in the *Atlantic* for last October, form an impressive diagnosis of the rigidity of present-day institutions and their rejection of necessary change. Then, for books, Kenneth Keniston's *The Uncommitted* and Erich Kahler's *The Tower and the Abyss* give painful insight into the shortcomings of an age lacking in moral inspiration. Curiously, one of the best discussions of what Americans ought to do to revivify their ideals and reform their habits, an article by John W. Gardner, former secretary of the Health, Education, and Welfare Department, reads as though it had been extracted from one of the eighteenth-century planners for a system of education for the United States. Summarizing the views of Nathaniel Chipman, a lawyer, jurist, educator and statesman of Vermont, who was elected to the United States Senate in 1797, Allen Hansen writes:

> If one viewed history in the large, he might "learn to account

for the constant superiority, in most nations, of private to public morality, as practiced by the same individuals." Hence the great problem was how to make institutions keep pace "with the general improvements of the people." As an example of survival he cited the custom of foot-binding in China. His argument was that Americans would become as blind in a smugness of their own, as were the English or the Chinese unless they deliberately set up agencies that would ensure progress through an attitude of experimentation in all things.

A kind of education was needed that would break the despotism of tradition. The task of creating institutions that would be fluid enough to keep abreast of progress and to further it, was very difficult and complex, for, "Indeed could every individual in society have an intuitive prescience of the changes, as they were to arise, it would still, perhaps, be impossible to form any human institution, which would accommodate itself to every situation in the progress."

This was the recognition of urgent need by very nearly all the statesmen-scholars of the new-born country, as they gave attention to the educational requirements of the United States. And Mr. Gardner, now chairman of the National Urban Coalition, says exactly the same thing (in the Los Angeles *Times* for last Dec. 1):

More and more, at this critical juncture of history, we must undertake imaginative redesign of institutions. And there has been ample evidence of such inventing and innovating on the social front. Among the consequences: the Bill of Rights, the Land Grant College, the county agent, the Federal Reserve System.

If we are serious about such redesign, then we must address ourselves to one of the central and universally neglected aspects of the problem: the decay of human institutions.

As they decay they imprison the spirit, thwart the creative impulse, diminish individual adaptability and limit the possibility of freedom. As the institutions grow increasingly resistant to criticism, the critics grow increasingly hostile. And the stage is then set for one of the most familiar contemporary dramas—violent collision between angry critics and sluggish institutions.

That human institutions require periodic design (if only because of their tendency to decay) is not a minor fact about them or easily overlooked. Taking the whole span of history, there is no more obvious lesson to be learned.

Mr. Gardner's discussion (originally an address at the California Institute of Technology on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert A. Millikan) ought to have a wide circulation, since it revives the social understanding and practical

wisdom of the Founding Fathers. Yet it needs, more than ever, to be supplemented by precisely the element which Mr. Judge saw to be lacking in the thought of the founders of the Republic. The reform of institutions is a complex and engrossing task. On any scale that is to be effective, such reform will require more than the insight of even the best of the eighteenth century. The need is for that vision of the meaning of life that comes with a sense of high egoic mission—found only in the teachings of Karma and Reincarnation.

Mr. Gardner himself senses the need for a more primary motivation, as he says in the conclusion of his address:

> No matter how accomplished our public servants may be, the inner mystery of democracy will always involve that old and good idea—we the people.
>
> You and I, and others like us, acting in our own communities around the nation, can pull this fragmented society together. We can recreate an America in which men speak to one another in trust and confidence, sharing common objectives, working toward common goals. We can return this nation to a path of confidence and well-being. We can design a society capable of continuous renewal. You and I can do these things. No one can do them for us.

This is indeed a renewal of the American Dream, in its original, authentic accents. And perhaps Mr. Gardner, as a public figure, has said as much as he can say. It remains for others, those who remain unknown, but are equally devoted, to provide those leavening influences which are capable of stirring the "inner mystery," able to develop conceptions of human identity that do not fade at the prospect of heroic effort. How else will be found the strength to accomplish what remains to be done?

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

WHILE it is true that the Society was organized in November, 1875, at a meeting in New York at which Col. H. S. Olcott was made presiding officer under the chairmanship of William Q. Judge, and that thereafter Col. Olcott was made President for life with H. P. Blavatsky as Corresponding Secretary, it is also the fact that the impulse and direction for such beginning came, as is asserted by the three persons named, from a body of Adepts or perfected men who have come to be called in theosophical writings the Mahatmas, the Masters, Initiates, and the like. These, H. P. Blavatsky said, told her to have the Society begun on a broad and free platform and to help Col. Olcott and all others in doing it, to the end that a definite attempt might be made to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood through which the truth as to Man and Nature might be discovered, and toward which latter end the said Masters promised their help in messages sent to H. P. Blavatsky.

These general facts and assertions were always made from the beginning. But at the same time the Society has not and cannot as a body officially declare those beliefs, and no one is asked to assent to them, nor does dissent disqualify anyone from membership. All that is asked is adherence to Universal Brotherhood. So too, while H. P. Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, and many others firmly believe that the Society is the outer body which for this century represents the great Inner one composed of the Adepts of whom H. P. Blavatsky spoke, members are not obliged to believe it nor debarred from membership or help because they do not believe it. But it is well for all members to know in the beginning what the founder said on the subject; and she also said, claiming to speak for the Adepts, that once in every hundred years an attempt is made by them to bring to the world's attention the great and universal truths taught by all great world-religions in their beginnings; and that this Society represents the attempt made for this century.

NOTE.—This article, previously reprinted in THEOSOPHY, is from a pamphlet entitled, "Suggestions to Branches," published by Mr. Judge as General Secretary, toward the end of 1890.

By reading the last of the *Key to Theosophy,* written by H. P. Blavatsky, you will find on pages 304-307 what she says on the matter of the end and aim of the T.S., of its opportunity, and of what is needed. Certainly all that should be looked into by those who have joined the body in which she was so important a person at its founding.

Before pointing out what would lead to the failure of the real mission of the Society, it is necessary to advert to the fact that in consequence of the success of the T.S. movement a number of so-called occult societies have sprung into existence, all of them bad copies of the original, and our members should be warned against them. These spurious and misleading bodies and teachers have come up since the T.S. was founded, and a very large number of them take a part of what this Society has given out or portions of what has come out of the Eastern Occult methods and use them for their own ends. There could be no objection to promulgation of good ideas, even without any acknowledgment, provided they are correctly given. But there is a distinct objection to the presentation of a mangled and distorted portion of the information merely to back up some wild theories of their own, as many have done. Through most of them some one or other Theosophical doctrine has been partially expressed, the rest of their teachings being platitude or unverifiable, unphilosophical matter, and the trusting student has frequently to pay large sums of money to get but a bad imitation of the teaching which is all given out in Theosophical literature free of charge. It is therefore necessary to point out definitely to all members that before hurrying away from the Theosophical Society to obtain what may seem to them spiritual food from "occult" bodies, they should examine carefully the literature now before the world, to see if all that is or may be taught in these schools does not already exist in print, and if it be not merely a copy of that which has been said hundreds of times before.

The possibility of failure of the Theosophical Society lies in the following:

Dogmatism. That is, the definite statement by the Society as a body that this or that is an absolute teaching or doctrine of the Society. This has been the ruin of every organization of the kind so far formed, and this time it must be carefully guarded against. The Society was formed without distinction of creeds, and for any member to lay down the law to any other member, or to any person,

as to what he should or should not accept as a belief of the T.S., is to commit a distinct breach of the contract he made on applying to join the ranks of the body. So too, members must not abuse their individual rights, asserting that belief in any doctrine or person is necessary in order to be a member or a Theosophist.

Priesthood. The possibility of forming a priesthood in a Society as free as this one may seem almost to have no existence. Nevertheless, so strongly is supersition grounded in the natures of the present race of men (although freer than their forefathers), and so weak is our race-character, that unless constantly freed from these tendencies and reminded of the necessity of leaning on our own Higher Selves for spiritual guidance, the danger of priestcraft is always present. This can be readily seen in the fact that not a new self-styled instructor turns up without his easily finding some pupils, and nearly every Hindu that visits our shores is run after by and often receives pledges, and also money, from persons who are too weak to think for themselves. This has to be guarded against.

Materialism. By this is meant a forgetfulness, on the part of the members, of their Spiritual Selves. Of course the study of the writings of agnostics and so-called materialists is invaluable in order that the Western ways of viewing life may be known, but it should be recollected that we too easily tend to be drawn away from a study of the causes of things—the spiritual side of Nature—to mere examination of their effects. And one risks losing much of his true perceptive power, and perhaps more than he imagines, unless ever on the alert to avoid crystallization, or falling into ruts or grooves. That is a reason why the study of the ancient occult teaching is recommended.

Non-Cosmopolitanism. Many of the attempts made in the past centuries have failed because they were kept confined to the minority, or to some particular race, or to some selected stratum of society. As far as possible, the work done by each Branch should extend all over the city or locality in which it is placed, the members not failing to recollect the existence of the law in Nature of compensation —the more help given to the race necessitates a greater help in return from Nature.

These are the main causes of possible failure in the Society as a whole and in the Branches as parts. And now another warning:

In the true Spiritual Philosophy there has always been one fixed

and unchanging law with regard to spiritual teaching: that it cannot be bought or sold. Hence if any member hears of a society or of a person giving occult instruction for *money* first to be paid, let him be sure that it is "of the earth, earthy." He will not be aided by it in the long run, but only led astray; and he will form Karmic bonds to it which it may take years for him to sever. Many members who failed to take benefit by this warning, given out when the Society was first established and repeated at intervals ever since, have found by experience its truth. Besides that, it seems only just and right that members should first help the T.S. before they spend money on self-styled occult guides who wish to be paid.

The Theosophical Society is formed on such a basis that each member can think as he chooses, yet maintain a willingness to learn from and to help others. In it all members are helped to learn, and will receive what aid can be given them through its ranks, and through older members, and through the information periodically given out by the Great Order of which it is a part. Like a great mother, the Spirit of the T.S. constantly keeps watch over the members, her children, permitting them to take what they can from every source of learning—spiritual and otherwise—silently instructing them in the best methods by which to help their fellowmen, but ever watchful lest they should go too far along some of the innumerable side-paths that lead off from that most dangerous and difficult of roads, the road of the Study of the Self.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

NON-SECTARIANISM IN PRACTICE

The Theosophical Society, as a body, has no creed, as creeds are but the shells around spiritual knowledge; and Theosophy in its fruition is spiritual knowledge itself—the very essence of philosophical and theistic enquiry. . . . Having no accepted creed, our Society is very ready to give and take, to learn and teach by practical experimentation, as opposed to mere passive and credulous acceptance of enforced dogma. It is willing to accept every result claimed by any schools or systems, that can be logically and experimentally demonstrated. Conversely, it can take nothing on mere faith, no matter by whom the demand may be made.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

letters • questions • comment

The Voice of the Silence *says*: *"The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer." What then is the proper function of the mind?*

If we consider the principles of man as foci of energy, or of Atma or Spirit, then mind in man is a dynamic force. If it is also remembered that the seven principles are derived from their cosmic counterparts, then mind, for us, is derived from the Universal Mind, and becomes, in turn, the vehicle of Spirit, or Buddhi, which cannot be effective on this plane except through mind. Since mind or Manas becomes dual in its activity when it incarnates, it may be said to have two general functions. One relates to dealings with matter in all its myriad forms starting with the most concrete. This involves the reasoning process, making distinctions, relative evaluations, judgments requiring the weighing of factors, and organization. The other is that function of mind which relates as vehicle to the Buddhic principle, which looks directly on ideas without reasoning from premise to conclusion. It is the aspect which finds reality in principles, which prompts a man to live his life in behalf of a cause even though he can give no convincing "practical" reasons for doing so. This higher mind enables him to calmly await a moment of decision, perhaps not knowing in detail what particular action is going to be taken until its moment arrives. Awake to the principles involved, and alert to make use of whatever materials Karma provides, he knows that the knowledge and needed materials will be available when the time for action comes.

The "still small voice" of conscience is one of the evidences which we have of our connection with higher planes. In *The Key to Theosophy,* H.P.B. describes conscience as the communication of the spiritual consciousness and the human consciousness. It seems, therefore, that conscience itself does not originate our ideas of right and wrong, but rather clothes the behests of the higher ego in the most suitable garb that our minds can provide. If the content of our minds is universal in its character and purified by selfless action, then conscience is able to serve as a fitting vehicle of higher

mind. But to the extent that its meaning is distorted by half-digested information or unexamined attitudes, its reflections of Buddhic intuitions will be productive of partisan judgments.

H.P.B. gives some practical advice on how to develop the habit of thinking with the higher mind in the article "Dialogues Between the Two Editors":

> The mind is dual in its potentiality: it is physical and metaphysical. The higher part of the mind is connected with the spiritual soul or Buddhi, the lower with the animal soul, the Kama principle. There are persons who never think with the higher faculties of their mind at all; those who do so are the minority and are thus, in a way, beyond, if not above, the average of human kind. These will think even upon ordinary matters on that *higher* plane.

The other editor then asks if the habit of thinking with the higher mind may not be developed; and H.P.B. replies:

> Certainly it can be developed, but only with great difficulty, a firm determination, and through much self-sacrifice. But it is comparatively easy for those who are born with the gift. Why is it one person sees poetry in a cabbage or a pig with her little ones, while another will perceive in the loftiest things only their lowest and most material aspect, will laugh at the "music of the spheres," and ridicule the most sublime conceptions and philosophies? This difference depends simply on the innate power of the mind to think on the higher or on the lower plane, with the *astral* (in the sense given to the word by St. Martin,) or with the physical brain. Great intellectual powers are often no proof of, but are impediments to spiritual and right conceptions; witness most of the great men of science. We must rather pity than blame them. . . .
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> The person who is endowed with this faculty of thinking about even the most trifling things from the higher plane of thought has, by virtue of that gift which he possesses, a plastic power of formation, so to say, in his very imagination. Whatever such a person may think about, his thought will be so far more intense than the thought of an ordinary person, that by this very intensity it obtains the power of creation. Science has established the fact that thought is an energy. This energy in its action disturbs the atoms of the astral atmosphere around us. . . . Every thought so evolved with energy from the brain, creates *nolens volens* a shape.

The mind properly functions, then, as a vehicle for Atma-Buddhi, and Kama, as a motivating force, has to be eliminated. If the attention is focussed in this way with determination, the mind will eventually take the form of such efforts. This must be part of the meaning of self sacrifice.

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME

GOD: *The Unknowable*

WE have often wondered at the extraordinary ideas of God and His justice that seem to be honestly held by those Christians who blindly rely upon the clergy for their religion, and never upon their own reason. How strangely illogical is this doctrine of the Atonement. We propose to discuss it with the Christians from the Buddhistic stand-point, and show at once by what a series of sophistries, directed toward the one object of tightening the ecclesiastical yoke upon the popular neck, its acceptance as a divine command has been finally effected; also, that it has proved one of the most pernicious and demoralizing of doctrines.

The clergy say: no matter how enormous our crimes against the laws of God and of man, we have but to believe in the self-sacrifice of Jesus for the salvation of mankind, and His blood will wash out every stain. God's mercy is boundless and unfathomable. It is impossible to conceive of a human sin so damnable that the price paid in advance for the redemption of the sinner would not wipe it out if a thousandfold worse. And, furthermore, it is never too late to repent. Though the offender wait until the last minute of the last hour of the last day of his mortal life, before his blanched lips utter the confession of faith, he may go to Paradise; the dying thief did it, and so may all others as vile. These are the assumptions of the Church.

But if we step outside the little circle of creed and consider the universe as a whole balanced by the exquisite adjustment of parts, how all sound logic, how the faintest glimmering sense of Justice revolts against this Vicarious Atonement! If the criminal sinned only against himself, and wronged no one but himself; if by sincere repentance he could cause the obliteration of past events, not only from the memory of man, but also from that imperishable record, which no deity—not even the Supremest of the Supreme—can cause to disappear, then this dogma might not be incomprehensible. But to maintain that one may wrong his fellow-man, kill, disturb the

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NOTE.—"The Christian Scheme," begun in November, 1967, is collated from the works of H. P. Blavatsky. It recounts the historical background and early development of Christianity.

equilibrium of society, and the natural order of things, and then—through cowardice, hope, or compulsion, matters not—be forgiven by believing that the spilling of one blood washes out the other blood spilt—this is preposterous! Can the *results* of a crime be obliterated even though the crime itself should be pardoned? The effects of a cause are never limited to the boundaries of the cause, nor can the results of crime be confined to the offender and his victim. Every good as well as evil action has its effects, as palpably as the stone flung into a calm water. The simile is trite, but it is the best ever conceived, so let us use it. The eddying circles are greater and swifter, as the disturbing object is greater or smaller, but the smallest pebble, nay, the tinest speck, makes its ripples. And this disturbance is not alone visible and on the surface. Below, unseen, in every direction—outward and downward—drop pushes drop until the sides and bottom are touched by the force. More, the air above the water is agitated, and this disturbance passes, as the physicists tell us, from stratum to stratum out into space forever and ever; an impulse has been given to matter, and that is never lost, can never be recalled! . . .

So with crime, and so with its opposite. The action may be instantaneous, the effects are eternal. When, after the stone is once flung into the pond, we can recall it to the hand, roll back the ripples, obliterate the force expended, restore the etheric waves to their previous state of non-being, and wipe out every trace of the act of throwing the missile, so that Time's record shall not show that it ever happened, then, *then* we may patiently hear Christians argue for the efficacy of this Atonement.

The Chicago *Times* recently printed the hangman's record of the first half of the present year (1877)—a long and ghastly record of murders and hangings. Nearly every one of these murderers received religious consolation, and many announced that they had received God's forgiveness through the blood of Jesus, and were going that day to Heaven! *Their conversion was effected in prison.* See how this ledger-balance of Christian Justice (!) stands: These red-handed murderers, urged on by the demons of lust, revenge, cupidity, fanaticism, or mere brutal thirst for blood, slew their victims, in most cases, without giving them time to repent, or call on Jesus to wash them clean with his blood. They, perhaps, died sinful, and, of course, —consistently with theological logic—met the reward of their greater or lesser offenses. But the murderer, overtaken by human justice, is imprisoned, wept over by sentimentalists, prayed with and

at, pronounces the charmed words of conversion, and goes to the scaffold a redeemed child of Jesus! Except for the murder, he would not have been prayed with, redeemed, pardoned. Clearly this man did well to murder, for thus he gained eternal happiness? And how about the victim, and his or her family, relatives, dependants, social relations—has Justice no recompense for them? Must they suffer in this world and the next, while he who wronged them sits beside the "holy thief" of Calvary and is forever blessed? On this question the clergy keep a prudent silence.

There is not one of the past and present *personal* gods, known to us from the earliest days of History, that does not belong to the third stage of Cosmic manifestation. In every religion we find the concealed deity forming the ground work; then the ray therefrom, that falls into primordial Cosmic matter (first manifestation); then the androgyne result, the dual Male and Female abstract Force, personified (*second* stage); this separates itself finally, in the *third,* into seven Forces, called the creative Powers by all the ancient Religions, and the "Virtues of God" by the Christians. The later explanation and metaphysical abstract qualifications have never prevented the Roman and Greek Churches from worshipping these "Virtues" under the personifications and distinct names of the seven Archangels. In the Book of *Druschim* (*p. 59, 1st Treatise*) in the Talmud, a distinction between these groups is given which is the correct Kabalistical explanation. It says:

"There are three groups (or orders) of *Sephiroth.* 1st. The Sephiroth called 'the divine attributes' (abstract). 2nd The physical or *sidereal* Sephiroth (personal)—one group of *seven,* the other of *ten.* 3rd. The metaphysical Sephiroth, or *periphrasis of Jehovah,* who are the first three Sephiroth (Kether, Chochma and Binah), the rest of the seven being the (personal) seven spirits of the Presence" (also of the planets).

The same division has to be applied to the primary, secondary and tertiary evolution of gods in every theogony, if one wishes to translate the meaning esoterically. We must not confuse the purely metaphysical personifications of the *abstract* attributes of Deity, with their reflection—the sidereal gods. This reflection, however, is in reality the objective expression of the abstraction: *living* Entities and the models formed on that divine prototype. Moreover, the three metaphysical Sephiroth or *"the periphrasis of Jehovah"* are *not* Jehovah; it is the latter himself with the additional titles of Adonai, Elo-

him, Sabbaoth, and the numerous names lavished on him, who is the periphrasis of the Shaddai, the Omnipotent. The name is a circumlocution, indeed, a too abundant figure of Jewish rhetoric, and has always been denounced by the Occultists. To the Jewish Kabalists, and even the Christian Alchemists and Rosicrucians, Jehovah was a convenient *screen,* unified by the folding of its many flaps, and adopted as a substitute: one name of an individual Sephiroth being as good as another name, for those who had the secret. The Tetragrammaton, the Ineffable, the sidereal *"Sum Total,"* was invented for no other purpose than to mislead the profane and to symbolize life and generation. The real secret and *unpronounceable* name—"the word that is no word"—has to be sought in the seven names of the first seven emanations, or the "Sons of the Fire," in the secret Scriptures of all the great nations, and even in the *Zohar,* the Kabalistic lore of that smallest of all, the Jewish. This word, composed of seven letters in each tongue, is found embodied in the architectural remains of every grand building in the world; from the Cyclopean remains on Easter Island (part of a continent buried under the seas nearer four million years ago than 20,000) down to the earliest Egyptian pyramids.

No cosmogony, the world over, with the sole exception of the Christian, has ever attributed to the One Highest cause, the UNIVERSAL Deific principle, the immediate creation of our Earth, man, or anything connected with these.

Religion and science were closer knit than twins in days of old; they were one in two, and two in one from the very moment of their conception. With mutually convertible attributes, science was spiritual and religion was scientific. Like the androgyne man of the first chapter of Genesis—"male and female," passive and active; created in the image of the Elohim. Omniscience developed omnipotency, the latter called for the exercise of the former, and thus the giant had dominion given him over all the four kingdoms of the world. But, like the second Adam, these androgynes were doomed to "fall and lose their powers" as soon as the two halves of the duality separated. The fruit of the Tree of Knowledge gives death without the fruit of the Tree of Life. Man must know *himself* before he can hope to know the ultimate genesis even of beings and powers less developed in their inner nature than himself. So with religion and science; united two in one they were infallible, for the spiritual intuition was there to supply the limitations of physical senses. Separated, exact

science rejects the help of the inner voice, while religion becomes merely dogmatic theology—each is but a corpse without a soul.

The esoteric doctrine, then, teaches, like Buddhism and Brahmanism, and even the persecuted *Kabala,* that the one infinite and unknown Essence exists from all eternity, and in regular and harmonious successions is either passive or active. In the poetical phraseology of Manu these conditions are called the "day" and the "night" of Brahma. The latter is either "awake" or "asleep." The Svâbhâvikas, or philosophers of the oldest school of Buddhism (which still exists in Nepaul), speculate but upon the active condition of this "Essence," which they call Svabhâvât, and deem it foolish to theorize upon the abstract and "unknowable" power in its passive condition. Hence they are called atheists by both Christian theology and modern scientists; for neither of the two are able to understand the profound logic of their philosophy. The former will allow of no other God than the personified *secondary* powers which have blindly worked out the visible universe, and which became with them the anthropomorphic God of the Christians—the Jehovah, roaring amid thunder and lightning. In its turn, rationalistic science greets the Buddhists and the Svâbhâvikas as the "positivists" of the archaic ages. If we take a one-sided view of the philosophy of the latter, our materialists may be right in their own way. The Buddhists maintain that there is *no* Creator but an infinitude of *creative powers,* which collectively form the one eternal substance, the *essence* of which is inscrutable—hence not a subject for speculation for any true philosopher. Socrates invariably refused to argue upon the mystery of universal being, yet no one would ever have thought of charging him with atheism, except those who were bent upon his destruction. Upon inaugurating an active period, says the Secret Doctrine, an expansion of this Divine essence, *from within outwardly,* occurs in obedience to eternal and immutable law, and the phenomenal or visible universe is the ultimate result of the long chain of cosmical forces thus progressively set in motion. In like manner, when the passive condition is resumed, a contraction of the Divine essence takes place, and the previous work of creation is gradually and progressively undone. The visible universe becomes disintegrated, its material dispersed; and "darkness," solitary and alone, broods once more over the face of the "deep." To use a metaphor which will convey the idea still more clearly, an outbreathing of the "unknown essence" produces the world; and an inhalation causes it

to disappear. *This process has been going on from all eternity, and our present Universe is but one of an infinite series which had no beginning and will have no end.*

Thus we are enabled to build our theories solely on the visible manifestations of the Deity, on its objective natural phenomena. To apply to these creative principles the term God is puerile and absurd. One might as well call by the name of Benvenuto Cellini the fire which fuses the metal, or the air that cools it when it is run in the mould. If the inner and ever-concealed spiritual, and to our minds abstract, Essence within these forces can ever be connected with the creation of the physical universe, it is but in the sense given to it by Plato. IT may be termed, at best, the framer of the abstract universe which developed gradually in the Divine Thought within which it had lain dormant.

In the first book of Manu, we read: "Know that the sum of 1,000 divine ages, composes the totality of one day of Brahma; and that one night is equal to that day." One thousand divine ages is equal to 4,320,000,000 of human years, in the Brahmanical calculations.

"At the expiration of each night, Brahma, who has been asleep, awakes, and through the sole energy of the motion causes to emanate from himself the spirit, which in its essence *is,* and yet is not."

"Prompted by the desire to create, the Spirit (first of the emanations) operates the creation and gives birth to ether, which the sages consider as having the faculty of transmitting sound.

"Ether begets air whose property is tangible, and which is necessary to life.

"Through a transformation of the air, light is produced.

"From air and light, which begets heat, water is formed, and the water is the womb of all the living germs."

Throughout the whole immense period of progressive creation, covering 4,320,000,000 years, ether, air, water and fire (heat), are constantly forming matter under the never-ceasing impulse of the Spirit, or the *unrevealed* God who fills up the whole creation, for he is in all, and all is in him. This computation, which was secret and which is hardly hinted at even now, led Higgins into the error of dividing every ten ages into 6,000 years. Had he added a few more ciphers to his sums he might have come nearer to a correct explanation of the neroses, or secret cycles.

In the *Sepher Jezireh,* the kabalistic Book of Creation, the author

has evidently repeated the words of Manu. In it, the Divine Substance is represented as having alone existed from the eternity, boundless and absolute; and emitted from itself the Spirit. "One is the Spirit of the living God, blessed be His Name, who liveth for ever! Voice, Spirit, and Word, this is the Holy Spirit;" and this is the kabalistic abstract Trinity, so unceremoniously anthropomorphized by the Fathers. From this triple ONE emanated the whole Cosmos. First from ONE emanated number TWO, or Air, the creative element; and then number THREE, *Water,* proceeded from the air; *Ether* or *Fire* complete the mystic four, the Arba-il. "When the Concealed of the Concealed wanted to reveal Himself, he first made a point (primordial point, or the first Sephira, air or Holy Ghost), shaped it into a sacred form (the ten Sephiroth, or the Heavenly man), and covered it with a rich and splendid garment, *that is the world."* "He maketh the wind His messengers, flaming Fire his servants," says the *Jezireh,* showing the cosmical character of the later euhemerized angels, and that the Spirit permeates every minutest atom of the Cosmos[1]

When the cycle of creation is run down, the energy of the manifested word is weakening. He alone, the Unconceivable, is unchangeable (ever latent), but the Creative Force, though also eternal, as it has been in the former from "no beginning," yet must be subject to periodical cycles of activity and rest; as it had a *beginning* in one of its aspects, when it first emanated, therefore must also have an end. Thus, the evening succeeds the day, and the night of the deity approaches. Brahma is gradually falling asleep. In one of the books of *Sohar,* we read the following:

"As Moses was keeping a vigil on Mount Sinai, in company with the Deity, who was concealed from his sight by a cloud, he felt a great fear overcome him and suddenly asked: 'Lord, where art Thou . . . sleepest thou, O Lord?' and the *Spirit* answered him: 'I never sleep; were I to fall asleep for a moment *before my time,* all the Creation would crumble into dissolution in one instant'." And Vamadeva-Modely describes the "Night of Brahma," or the second period of the Divine Unknown existence, thus:

"Strange noises are heard, proceeding from every point. . . . These are the precursors of the Night of Brahma; *dusk rises at the horizon*

[1] It is interesting to recall Hebrews 1:7, in connection with this passage. "Who maketh his angels (messengers) spirits, and his ministers (servants, those who minister) a flame of fire." The resemblance is too striking for us to avoid the conclusion that the author of "Hebrews" was as familiar with the "Kabala" as adepts usually are.

and the Sun passes away behind the thirtieth degree of Macara (sign of the zodiac), and will reach no more the sign of the *Minas* (zodiacal *pisces,* or fish). The gurus of the pagodas appointed to watch the rās-chakr (Zodiac), may now break their circle and instruments, for they are henceforth useless.

"Gradually light pales, heat diminishes, uninhabitable spots multiply on the earth, the air becomes more and more rarefied; the springs of waters dry up, the great rivers see their waves exhausted, the ocean shows its sandy bottom, and plants die. Men and animals decrease in size daily. Life and motion lose their force, planets can hardly gravitate in space; they are extinguished one by one, like a lamp which the hand of the chokra (servant) neglects to replenish. Sourya (the Sun) flickers and goes out, matter falls into dissolution (pralaya), and Brahma merges back into Dyäus, the Unrevealed God, and his task being accomplished, he falls asleep. Another day is passed, night sets in and continues until the future dawn.

"And now again re-enter into the golden egg of His Thought, the germs of all that exist, as the divine Manu tells us. During His peaceful rest, the animated beings, endowed with the principles of action, cease their functions, and all feeling (manas) becomes dormant. When they are all absorbed in the SUPREME SOUL, this Soul of all the beings sleeps in complete repose, till the day when it resumes its form, and awakes again from its primitive darkness."

The ever unknowable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless* Cause of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart—invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through "the still small voice" of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls; making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit,* their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence.*

THE EGOIC FIELD

DECISION-MAKING is dynamic in proportion to the degree of Egoic involvement and Self-awareness. The life of Buddha as portrayed in *The Light of Asia* is a classic example. For thousands of years it has served as an ideal and an inspiration, but such a life is the culmination of countless decisions in ages past. As Wm. Q. Judge says in *The Ocean of Theosophy*:

> The good man who at last becomes a sage had at one time in his many lives to arouse the desire for the company of holy men and to keep his desire for progress alive in order to continue on his way. Even a Buddha or a Jesus had first to make a vow, which is a desire, in some life, that he would save the world or some part of it, and to persevere with the desire alive in his heart through countless lives.

The average man, intent on an objective, may sometimes consider his motive and the consequences of the choice he is about to make, but frequently decisions are made through habit—unquestioned continuance in a familiar direction. Persistence along this line shuts out participation of the Ego. Eventually, though some form of excellence may be achieved, the question needs to be asked, Was it *worth doing at all?*

To see the worthlessness of a seeming excellence may indeed be frustrating; on the other hand it may disclose and illuminate the step ahead. Having served a purpose, the frustration can readily be forgotten. Any experience is beneficent if it brings to realizing attention the basic fact that choice is a momentary guide in life, while *direction* grows from discriminating intelligence.

To consider any subject in its various aspects in the light of Theosophical teachings raises numerous questions. Analytic thinking tends to isolate man, yet he is an inseparable part of the race to which he belongs. "Human evolution is universal and not particular; one can cannot go very far beyond his race before the time." The events of race evolution manifest externally to us, and internally as well. We consequently criticize or commend the without, while within we rationalize or justify. Could we see ourselves as others see us, or if they could *know* how we feel, life would be an-

other story—one that fulfills the purpose of evolution.

It is inevitable that statements of the Teachers made last century, are seen in a new light concerning the future. Written long ago, Mr. Judge's words in the closing paragraph of the chapter on Cycles (*Ocean,* p. 126) have still wider meaning in terms of the events of today:

> As 1897-98 are not far off, the scientific men of today will have an opportunity of seeing whether the close of the five-thousand-year cycle will be preceded or followed by any convulsions or great changes political, scientific or physical, or all of these combined. Cyclic changes are now proceeding as year after year the souls from prior civilizations are being incarnated in this period when liberty of thought and action are not so restricted in the West as they have been in the past by dogmatic religious prejudice and bigotry. And at the present time we are in a cycle of transition, when, as a transition period should indicate, everything in philosophy, religion and society is changing.

In our "individual" cycle of transition, it is natural to feel *ourselves* free of prejudice and bigotry. But the personal man has partisan vision, and his intolerance is evidenced by his judgment of how "blind" *others* are. Even—and sometimes especially—in the family relationship, the pattern of transition reveals itself. What is the generation gap? Literally, it is widest in *years* between the very young and the very old, yet provides a natural experience of mutual participation in the joys and needs of living together. The contrast is suggestive of the "reciprocity" throughout the natural world, and there need be no conflict, in the human sense.

The "gap" deepens when ideas are opposed; and by this measurement, it may be narrowest between the young and the old and widest between members of successive generations. Conflict arises with choice and, we might say, with its consequent responsibility. The choice is at both levels: the child and the adult. We know what the child needs, we think; but these needs are generally in terms of the *mores* of the time, productions of the race mind. Being of temporary value, they may still provide a discipline—a training of the "lives" that make up the instrument of the reincarnating Ego. But discipline should help, not hinder. And niceties of form may engage too much attention.

External conflict results from both kinds of sense-of-self on the part of the child, and a sense of anxiety on the part of the adult; this has no predictable end. By analogy we may look at the world today

in widespread conflict—a conflict rooted on the one hand in an emerging sense-of-self in the groups struggling for their own place in the world, and on the other, in the habitual sense of importance manifested by the powerful nations striving to maintain and increase their power.

Yet internal conflict is the core of evolution. It cannot be categorized save symbolically, as in the *Voice of the Silence*. What appears as fighting against existing conditions may in reality be fighting *for* liberty of thought. The child, encouraged for years to make decisions, suddenly wants to make decisions self-consciously. It takes time, however, to exercise a potential power and learn its rightful place in the human economy. An example of internal conflict in the life of Buddha shows that neither fatherly love nor kingly power could alter the emerging destiny of the young Prince, once the hour had struck for his awakening to his mission. So the longings and searchings of the human heart and mind will break through any obstructions the world of man can devise. In times of turmoil, the mind will not remain complacent and still. This is such a time —which finds explanation in some words of W.Q.J.:

> As Mind is being evolved more and more as we proceed in our course along the line of the race development, there can be perceived underneath in all countries the beginning of the transition from the animal possessed of the germ of real mind to the man of mind complete. This day is therefore known to the Masters, who have given out some of the old truths, as the "transition period." The theosophist sees all around him the evidence that the race mind is changing by enlargement, that the old days of dogmatism are gone and the "age of inquiry" has come, that the inquiries will grow louder year by year and the answers be required to satisfy the mind as it grows more and more, until at last, all dogmatism ended, the race will be ready to face all problems, each man for himself, all working for the good of the whole, and that the end will be the perfecting of those who struggle to overcome the brute. For these reasons the old doctrines are given out again, and Theosophy asks every one to reflect whether to give way to the animal below or look up to and be governed by the God within.

This is the essence of the inner struggle which originates with choice, which is clarified through reflection, and consummated in understanding what life is all about—why we are born into a particular family, and how full advantage may be taken of the myriad opportunities which the Ocean of Life washes to our door, and then away again. The tendency to isolate for ourselves what we like, to

the neglect of all else, distorts our sense of values. "That which stands in the way of knowledge is ignorance, and from the point of view of true occultism, the root of all ignorance lies in misconceptions as to one's own essential nature."

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME?

I have the personal faith that mankind will somehow rise up to the occasion and give new directions to an age drifting rapidly to its doom. In spite of the tensions and uncertainties of this period something profoundly meaningful is taking place. Old systems of exploitation and oppression are passing away, and out of the wombs of a frail world new systems of justice and equality are being born. Doors of opportunity are gradually being opened to those at the bottom of society. The shiftless and barefoot people of the land are developing a new sense of "somebodiness" and carving a tunnel of hope through the dark mountain of despair. "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light." Here and there an individual or group dares to love, and rises to the majestic heights of moral maturity. So in a real sense this is a great time to be alive. Therefore, I am not yet discouraged about the future. Granted that the easygoing optimism of yesterday is impossible. Granted that those who pioneer in the struggle for peace and freedom will still face uncomfortable jail terms, painful threats of death: they will still be battered by the storms of persecution leading them to the nagging feeling that they can no longer bear such a heavy burden, and the temptation of wanting to retreat to a more quiet and serene life. Granted that we face a world crisis which leaves us standing so often amid the surging murmur of life's restless sea. But every crisis has both its dangers and its opportunities. It can spell either salvation or doom. In a dark confused world the kingdom of God may yet reign in the hearts of men.

—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

on the lookout

Society's Crime

Karl Menninger's latest book, *The Crime of Punishment* (Viking, $8.95), solves no mysteries of human nature, nor does it settle what to do about the problem of crime. Yet it is a valuable book if only for the reason that it lays bare the cruelty and hypocrisy of present-day treatment of lawbreakers and exposes gross inequalities in the administration of the law. Dr. Menninger has shown a lifelong interest in this subject, and from the contents of his book it is evident that he has also worked long and hard to reduce the part played by the punitive motive in the operations of criminal law. He brings to the reader numerous examples of enlightened penology—some of them from the practice of other countries—and lays down the rule that only protection of society and re-education of the offender can justify depriving a man of his freedom.

Restriction, not Punishment

Writing on this subject in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 200), Madame Blavatsky said:

> For man to take the law into his own hands is anyhow a sacrilegious presumption. Human Law may use restrictive not punitive measures; but a man who, believing in Karma, still revenges himself and refuses to forgive every injury, thereby rendering good for evil, is a criminal and only hurts himself. As Karma is sure to punish the man who wronged him, by seeking to inflict an additional punishment on his enemy, he, who instead of leaving that punishment to the great Law adds to it his own mite, only begets thereby a cause for the future reward of his own enemy and a future punishment for himself.

While Dr. Menninger does not invoke the Law of Karma, he has a chapter titled with its Christian equivalent—"Vengeance Is Mine, Saith the Lord." Pondering what seems an innate tendency to aggression and vengeance in human beings, Dr. Menninger writes:

> What is it about violence that so intrigues us? Is it man's true nature? Are we all so violent, so destructive, so criminal at heart? Is it an instinct?

The Promethean Ill

From the evidence of history, Dr. Menninger thinks the answer may be yes. He finds the myth of Zeus's condemnation of Prometheus a symbolic explanation:

> Zeus, the great God of the Greek scriptures, had a violent father whom he fought and finally destroyed. But when Prometheus, who was, in a way, the Greek Jesus Christ, sought to benefit the human race, his rebellious doctrine antagonized Zeus. So Prometheus was punished in that famous terrible way: chained to a rock, forever subject to the continuous lacerating attacks of a liver-loving eagle.
>
> Even then Zeus was not satisfied. He punished mankind for its passive sin of having enjoyed Prometheus' gift of fire. Roared he: "I shall give men an evil as the price of (that) fire. *They will clasp destruction with the laughter of desire!*"

Dr. Menninger reads this as meaning the "lust for aggression and self-destruction," which he identifies: "The great sin by which we all are tempted is the wish to hurt others, and this sin must be avoided if we are to live and let live." From his experience as a doctor of the mind Dr. Menninger has no difficulty in showing the close relation between aggression and self-destruction. However, a more searching diagnosis would go on to recognize aggression as a direct consequence of the "heresy of separateness"—the delusion that we can harm others without hurting ourselves.

Stimulus to Violence

In a discussion of the habitual violence of Western civilization, Dr. Menninger seems to agree with Dr. Frederick Wertham, whom he quotes as follows:

> The idea that has done the greatest harm to American audiences, especially to youths, is the notion that film violence provides a safe outlet for hostility and pent-up aggression; that it functions as a safety valve; that it provides a vicarious satisfaction, thus preventing violent acts; that it has a cathartic effect by relieving tensions that might otherwise explode into real action. It is interesting how many intelligent and educated people have fallen for this belief that the representation of sadistic scenes prevents the execution of sadistic acts. The whole conception is completely unsubstantiated clinically and experimentally. On the contrary, research shows that mass media violence, including movies, acts not as a substitute but a stimulus.

Dr. Wertham has written much along these lines, showing the effects on children of frequent exposure to scenes of violence.

Dark Compulsion

Dr. Menninger discusses the resort to crime and violence at length, showing, at least for the Theosophical reader, how large a part psychic susceptibility may play in crime:

> When a psychiatrist examines many prisoners, writes Halleck, he soon discovers how important in the genesis of the criminal outbreak is the offender's previous *sense of helplessness or hopelessness*. . . . The offender often puts it, "There was nothing else to do" or "I had to do it." . . . .
>
> Penetrating scientific studies by many competent workers of the lives of criminals have shown that the end obtained in the violent act is *rarely* and exceptionally what the offender wanted or set out for! (No prosecuting attorney believes this.) The effect of a violent act—the death of a victim, the acquisition of money, the gratification of sexual excitement—these are rarely the determining factors in any crime! The offender himself may insist that they are, but the truth is he does not know, as a rule, what pathological factors in his personality eroded his self-control and perverted his conscience in such a way as to eventuate in his self-destructive methods of living. The best he can say (as he usually does) is that "it seemed like a good idea at the time."

Unrealized Ideal

In short, Dr. Menninger makes it plain that crime is a consequence of failure in moral health, and that human reconstruction, and not punishment, should be the guiding principle of penology. There has been, he says, a little progress in this direction, but the vision of corrective measures which heal instead of scar, which restore instead of merely confine, has had only fractional realization; for—

> Reformation of the individual is *still* not the purpose of our system. The infliction of vindictive suffering has *still* not been repudiated. The prisoner *still* has little to do with his destiny, and can scarcely imagine that he does have. Prison discipline, far from gaining anyone's good will or conserving anyone's self-respect, *still* tends to do just the opposite. And a prison whose primary aim is to make offenders into "industrious, free men rather than orderly and obedient prisoners" is yet to be born.

The phrase quoted in the last sentence was taken from a statement of purposes formulated almost a century ago (in 1870) by American prison administrators who later formed the American Correctional Association, but it represents a dream that cannot be realized so long as prisons attempt to combine punishment with reformation.

Public Responsibility

The only hope, as Dr. Menninger sees the problem of crime, is a basic change in attitude by the people at large. He says:

> We don't love criminals. We hate them. We despise them. We regard them as disagreeable, dangerous failures. And we do not really believe, most of us, that they can be rehabilitated, that they can change for the better, or that it is worthwhile making the effort.

The ideal attitude in relation to lawbreakers, Dr. Menninger feels, is the *therapeutic* attitude:

> Do I believe there is effective treatment for offenders, and that they *can* be changed? *Most certainly and definitely I do.* Not all cases, to be sure; there are also some physical afflictions which we cannot cure at the moment. Some provision has to be made for incurables—pending new knowledge—and these will include some offenders. But I believe the majority of them would prove to be curable. The willfulness and the viciousness of offenders are part of the thing for which they have to be treated. These must not thwart the therapeutic attitude.

There is ample evidence in this book to show that changed attitudes toward lawbreakers helps to produce changed men.

Perverting Entertainment

It is also evident, however, that a handful of devoted men cannot accomplish such far-reaching reforms alone. They need the help of the larger society, and this includes the major institutions of society. Earlier, a quotation from Dr. Wertham referred to the effects of popular entertainment on the young. But the destructive influence is not simply in the "violence" of television programs and comic books. Great drama may have violence in it—as, one might say, a "study" in Karma—but the effects of violence in superficial entertainment are disguised by a cruel indifference to its victims. Jessamyn West wrote of this corrupting use of the mass media some years ago (in *Redbook* for January, 1963):

> Today there exists a conspiracy of doubletalk—a conspiracy to dehumanize the victims and whitewash the process by which they are erased. Death on the screen is so easy a matter. The fast draw, the quick collapse. We are never permitted to see very much of the man who is going to die. We must not learn to care for *him*, to feel that *his* death matters; otherwise our enjoyment of his violent end will be weakened. We must never see him as a fellow who planted radishes, made kites for his kids or patted a

> dog on the head. . . . By dehumanizing the action (real persons don't die, only the "bad men"), by never giving the proper name to what we see, are we blinded to reality? Is a generation of Americans being prepared for the routine and casual killings of concentration camps and gas chambers, of death marches and saturation bombings, of mass evacuations and 100-megaton explosions? . . . .

Distorting Images

> There are many intelligent, thoughtful people who believe there is too much violence on our movie and television screens and that it is particularly bad for children to see it. But what is really wrong is that the children do *not* see it. They see only the pleasure of landing the blow without ever imagining the pain of receiving it, without even imagining that the one who receives the blow is capable of suffering pain.
>
> The TV screen wherein only bad men die, and then neatly and with dispatch, dulls and kills the imagination—and whatever destroys the imagination limits and ultimately destroys man.

This isolation from the pain of victims, characteristic not only of our popular entertainment, but also of our wars, is surely at the root of much of the violence which is beginning to overwhelm ordinary forms of restraint, revealing the karmic penalties which inevitably overtake those who use a temporary prosperity to shut out the sufferings of the rest of the world.

Teacher Expectations

A report in the Los Angeles *Times* (Oct. 6, 1968) draws attention to the relationship between expectation and achievement in school integration. Carefully-controlled maze experiments with two groups of rats, followed by another series of experiments with elementary school children, indicated that the beliefs of teachers about the potential of their pupils significantly affect the children's performance. In both series of experiments the investigators were led to believe that one group was brighter than the other, and while there was no actual distinction it was found again and again that the group that was expected to do better, did do better. The *Times* writer, summing up the results of this investigation, says:

> Such is the situation that often pertains to Negro children entering integrated classrooms. Often, the teacher expects that the Negro child will be unable to do the academic work, will be destructive and will lose interest. As is noted in the two experiments above, we humans have a way of making what we expect come true.

Power of Suggestion

> Not only can the teacher's attitude influence his response to the child, but he unwittingly can convey the same set of expectancies to the youngster. Soon enough, the Negro child may begin to think of himself as someone who can't keep up, or someone who is destined to "flunk."
>
> This kind of expectancy can pertain to any school child. The child who has had psychiatric treatment for emotional problems is often "expected" to cause trouble. Whenever a disturbance occurs in the classroom, the teacher may automatically look in his direction. The child, sensing that he is expected to make trouble, can learn to oblige his teacher.

Idea of the Self

Limitations of environment and native ability inevitably exert an influence on a child's accomplishment. But the quality of the expectations of both teacher and pupil will not only influence the pupil's actual accomplishment but will also, more significantly in the long run, affect his receptivity and responsiveness in the performance of future tasks. So the contribution of the teacher is not to be judged so much by the pupils' ability to meet a specific standard as by the mental and psychic resources that are developed in the learning situation. A teacher looking for evidences of the presence of the Ego will be alert to make the most of such signs, in whatever form they may manifest. And the Theosophical teaching that each child or person is a soul, with an illimitable past and future, would have far-reaching influence on the self-idea of the student.

Revision of Draft Law

The Los Angeles *Herald-Examiner* (Oct. 17, 1968), takes note of the fact that the reference to belief in a "Supreme Being" is now deleted from the forms to be filled out by applicants for conscientious objector status. This is in accord with last year's revision of the draft law by Congress. The Selective Service Act has since its original adoption limited the privilege of conscientious objection to those "who by reason of religious training and belief [are] conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form," and in 1948 Congress specified "religious training and belief" meant belief in a Supreme Being. However, in 1965 the Supreme Court in the case of *United States* v. *Seeger* [380 U.S. 163 (1965)] held that "the Supreme Being requirement of the section distinguished 'between internally derived and externally compelled beliefs' and

was, therefore, an 'impermissible classification' under the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment. . . ."

The revision of the law, last year, by Congress to conform to this decision indicates a broadening of religious views and a more sophisticated awareness of the complex social patterns of our society.

Diverse Beliefs

In giving the opinion for the court Justice Clark said:

> Over 250 sects inhabit our land. Some believe in a purely personal God, some in a supernatural deity; others think of religion as a way of life envisioning as its ultimate goal the day when all men can live together in perfect understanding and peace. There are those who think of God as the depth of our being; others, such as the Buddhists, strive for a state of lasting rest through self-denial and inner purification; in Hindu philosophy, the Supreme Being is the transcendental reality which is truth, knowledge and bliss.

Justice Clark notes that Congress deliberately avoided use of the word "God," in favor of the phrase "Supreme Being" as subject to broader interpretation. He then says:

> The test might be stated in these words: A sincere and meaningful belief which occupies in the life of its possessor a place parallel to that filled by the God of those admittedly qualifying for the exemption comes within the statutory definition. . . .

In a concurring opinion Justice Douglas drew on Eastern philosophy to support this broad interpretation of the phrase "Supreme Being":

> According to the Upanishads, Hindu sacred texts, the Supreme Being is described as the power which creates and sustains everything, and to which the created things return upon dissolution. The word which is commonly used in the Upanishads to indicate the Supreme Being is Brahmâ. Philosophically, the Supreme Being is the transcendental Reality which is Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss. It is the source of the entire universe. In this aspect Brahmâ is Isvara, a personal Lord and Creator of the universe, an object of worship. But, in the view of one school of thought, that of Sankara, even this is an imperfect and limited conception of Brahmâ which must be transcended; to think of Brahmâ as the Creator of the material world is necessarily to form a concept infected with illusion, or *maya*—which is what the world really is, in highest truth. Ultimately, mystically, Brahmâ must be understood as without attributes, as *neti neti* (not this, not that).

This freeing of the idea of conscience from sectarian limitation, in

the highest law of the land, is encouraging evidence that the spirit of freedom represented by the Constitution still exercises influence in the United States.

Scandinavians in America

The idea that the Scandinavians discovered America several centuries before Columbus has only recently aroused scholarly interest. Formerly, speculation centered on an expedition presumably headed by Lief Ericson—about 1003, according to evidence collected by Ole G. Landsverk, an expert on medieval Scandinavia (Los Angeles *Times,* April 24, 1968). Mr. Landsverk declares that colonies were established in the "New World," and that the explorations of the Scandinavians extended down the eastern coast of what is now America, around Florida, west around the Gulf of Mexico into the Mississippi delta, and possibly as far as what is now eastern Oklahoma. There is also evidence that colonies called Markland (Canadian coastal area) and Vinland (New England area) were developed subsequently, and that the Norsemen may have explored or colonized inland areas by use of the Great Lakes route. Corroborative evidence of this colonization is found in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 297), where H. P. Blavatsky says: "America was a non-existent myth for Europeans during the early part of the mediæval ages, whereas Scandinavians and Norwegians had actually reached and settled in that very old 'New World,' several centuries before."

Records of the Runestones

Mr. Landsverk bases his claims on a reading of hidden codes (cryptograms) dating Norse runestones found in America. According to him, "almost two dozen runestones (flat surface rocks bearing medieval Norse inscriptions) have been found at various locations in America." Though the authenticity of the runestones has been questioned because of what Mr. Landsverk calls "purposely hidden" dates, "it is only a matter of time," he thinks, until "certain of our reluctant scholars become believers of these cryptograms." Methods of recording events by runestones and similar devices are, according to H.P.B., "simply the *written* records of the oldest races." Examples have been found in widely scattered areas of Asia and Europe. She also says (*S.D.* II, 346 fn.) that "Sweden, Norway, and Scandinavia are full of such *written* records, the Runic characters having followed the cup-marks and long and short strokes" which characterize stone inscriptions.